

The Southwester

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May 2000

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An aerial view of the site of the Mandarin Hotel.

Mandarin Hotel Due At Portals

The big hole in the ground at 14th and Maryland Ave. S.W. will be filled partially with a new luxury hotel, The Mandarin. The go-ahead by the city was given by the city at a hearing in March at which testimony was received by city officials and Southwest ANC Commissioner Richard Westbrook.

The D.C. government's Tax Increment Financing bonds are expected to be offered on Wall Street in May or June to help pay for the project. (See TIF, p. 7).

The 400-room hotel will have 33,000 square feet of convention, meeting and banquet space, restaurants, a fitness center, 90,000 square feet of parking and 6,500 square feet of retail space. It will partially complete the Portals complex, which already has one million square feet of office space occupied by the Federal Communications Commission, the U.S. Dept. of Education and the Federal Aviation Authority. Remaining to be developed is Parcel D, a large vacant lot on the north side of Maryland Ave. S.W.

Eric Price, Mayor Anthony Williams' deputy for planning and development, told a Council committee hearing that an estimated 500 construction jobs over two years and 400 to 500 full-time positions will result from the project.

Representing the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group, based in Hong Kong, Michael Shindler reported their commitment to hiring goals of "40% minority hiring and 40% minority participation in all training programs, of which 40% of those numbers should be women."

SW ANC Commissioner Richard Westbrook cited changes to the Ward 2 Comprehensive Plan as tying into the Mandarin Hotel project. The Southwest Waterfront and a pedestrian connection with the National Mall are emphasized in the Ward 2 Plan and in the Mandarin Hotel development. (See *MANDARIN stories and picture on p. 7*) ■

S.W. Group Gets Quick Reply From Cdr. Dine

A week after the Fourth St. Neighborhood Group wrote First District MPD Commander Kim Dine, it had its reply in writing.

The group asked for increased night patrols on M and N Streets, S.W., and is concerned over turnover in lieutenants, sergeants and MPOs.

Cdr. Dine promised to keep Lt. Douglas assigned in Patrol Service Area 110 "as long as I can." Aggressive recruiting of new officers to join MPD "will hopefully reduce the number of transfers over time."

"As it relates to your request for focused patrol in the area of M and N Streets, we have continued to increase our visibility, especially around these requested areas and will continue to do so," said Cdr. Dine. (For full text of letters see p. 6.) ■

Farrell, Simon, Rev. Wise Join SWNA Board

New faces on the Board of Directors of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, Inc. include the Rev. Michael Wise, first vice president, and district directors Mark Farrell of the 1st SWNA District and Gottlieb Simon, 2nd SWNA District.

Reelected were President the Rev. George E. Holmes, Second Vice President Margaret Feldman, Secretary Jean Macdonald, Treasurer Ellen Winship and District directors Perry Klein, for 1st SWNA District, Jacquelyn Matthews, for 2nd SWNA District, Lonnie Murray, Joan Rhones and Cathy Wallace, for 3rd SWNA District and Gloria Hamilton, Herbert Holmes, and Patricia Pressley, 4th SWNA District. ■



New Anacostia Waterfront Promised

A shipboard signing ceremony launched plans for development of both sides of the Anacostia River from Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Stadium and along the Southwest Waterfront to the 14th Street Bridge.

The signatures of 20 federal, local and regional agencies were set to a "Memorandum of Understanding" promising cooperation in achieving shared goals for the waterfront.

The ceremony, aboard the U.S.S. Barry at the Washington Navy Yard at 9th St. S.E., included such federal agencies as the US Army Corps of Engineers and Government Services Administration (GSA), regional agencies as Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (METRO), and local agencies as the Department of Public Works and Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Summit Fund of Washington at its March Board Meeting granted \$200,000 for community outreach for the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative.

A Southeast Neighborhood Workshop is scheduled for May 18-22, 2000, although invitations had not been sent out as The Southwester went to press. Some sessions will be open to the public. Others will be for professionals with experience in waterfront development to be invited from throughout the country. Similar community meetings will be held for the Southwest Waterfront and for other parts of the Anacostia Waterfront Initiative.

The D.C. planning department release announcing the shipboard signing stated:

"The Memorandum of Understanding signing will begin an ambitious year-long effort of immediate projects and the creation of a comprehensive plan for the Anacostia waterfront communities, including:" Among a list of seven bulleted paragraphs that followed was this:

"Southwest: In cooperation with the Redevelopment Land Agency, the City will develop a new vision to fully realize the potential of the Southwest waterfront and Waterside Mall located only seven blocks from the National Mall." ■

SW History Group Formed

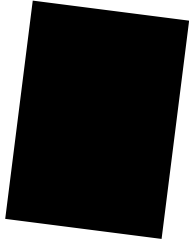
A new group has been formed to study and publicize Southwest historical features for Southwest residents and visitors. The group is chaired by Margaret Feldman and includes Joseph Curtis who took photos of Southwest just before the Urban Renewal demolition, Kim Holien the official Army Historian for Ft. McNair, Susan Lemke of Ft. McNair Special Collections Library, Keith Melder historian author, Col. Turnbull of Tiber Island Law House, Eugene Buehler, Gary Young, and Sheila Wickowski. Present activities are to work on captions and plan an historical walk of the Waterfront, and to participate in the Smithsonian Folklife Festival this June. Plans are underway to have a Photo Gallery in Waterside Mall showing pictures of Old Southwest and people from the past. As part of this, the Southwest Health Clinic at Delaware and I St. is having its 60th Anniversary this year and wants to show pictures from the past. Anyone with appropriate Clinic pictures is urged to take them to the clinic. Several other projects are being considered. The next meeting will be Monday April 17th, at 10 AM at the Law House on N St., part of Tiber Island condominiums. Interested people are invited to join. Is there anyone who would like to help with the Photo Gallery? For further information please contact Margaret Feldman at 554-0242 or mefeldman@aol.com. ■

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Part-Time Church Secretary

SW Church is looking for a person with good telephone and computer skills (MS Windows, Word or WordPerfect, and Internet). Basic understanding of church operations is a plus. Submit resume and hourly salary requirements to St. Matthew's Lutheran Church; Attn: Council President; 222 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20024. ■

Wanted, Part-Time Youth Coordinator

A skilled person to work with community groups to develop youth programs, establish collaborative relationships, organize planning meetings (and more) is needed by the Youth Activities Task Force of SWNA. If interested, please call Rick Bardach, chair of the task force, at 554-8282. ■

Southwest Community Calendar

April-May

- | | | |
|----------|-----------|--|
| April 15 | Saturday | Komen Toastmasters Club
10 am Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| April 19 | Wednesday | AARP SW Waterfront Chapter #4751
12 noon St. Matthews Lutheran Church 222 M St., SW |
| April 19 | Wednesday | Police Community Information Meeting
7pm River Park Mutual Homes, 1301 Delaware Ave., SW |
| April 20 | Thursday | Task Force on Safety
7pm SWNA Office, Waterside Mall 401 M St., SW |
| April 24 | Monday | SWNA Assembly Meeting
7:30pm St. Matthew's Lutheran Church 222 M St., SW |
| April 26 | Wednesday | Fil-Am Toastmasters Club
6:45pm Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| April 27 | Thursday | DC Chapter 2052
12 noon Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| May 1 | Monday | SWNA Board
7pm SWNA Office, Waterside Mall 401 M St., SW |
| May 2 | Tuesday | Primary DC Elections
7am-8pm, Precinct 127 - St. Matthew's Church, Precinct 128 - Friendship Baptist Church, Precinct 129 - Jefferson Jr. HS |
| May 2 | Tuesday | 1st District MPD Citizen's Advisory Council
7pm, DCPD, 415 Fourth St., SW Community Room |
| May 6 | Saturday | Komen Toastmasters Club
10am Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| May 8 | Monday | Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2D
7pm Westminster Presbyterian Church, 4th and I St., SW |
| May 9 | Tuesday | Health Fair, sponsored by SWNA, ANC,
4pm-7pm, Friendship Baptist Church, 900 Delaware Ave., SW |
| May 10 | Wednesday | Fil-Am Toastmasters Club
6:45pm Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| May 10 | Wednesday | Wiley Branton CDC Annual Meeting
Time & place TBA. Call 484-3026 for details. |
| May 13 | Saturday | Police Partnership Workshop
10am-1pm River Park 1301 Delaware Ave., SW, Commons Room |
| May 17 | Wednesday | AARP SW Waterfront Chapter #4751
12 noon St. Matthews Lutheran Church 222 M St., SW |
| May 20 | Saturday | Komen Toastmasters Club
10am Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| May 22 | Monday | SWNA Assembly Meeting
7:30pm St. Matthew's Lutheran Church 222 M St., SW |
| May 24 | Wednesday | Fil-Am Toastmasters Club
6:45pm Southwest Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |
| May 25 | Thursday | NARFE 12 noon SW Branch Library, 920 Wesley Place, SW |

Please submit calendar items for the next issue by May 3rd to C.W. Hargrave, 554-8284.



A new "dollar store" in Waterside Mall

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Karen Finkel <i>Desktop Publisher</i>	

Drop off your stories on diskette with photos by Wednesday, May 3, in the box behind the counter at the SW Library, 3rd & I or the desk at 700 7th St., SW, Box 130.
E-mail text to: thesouthwester@yahoo.com
Printing by Silver Communications Corp.

Health Fair & Carnival, Mon. April 24

On Easter Monday, Apr. 24, L Street S.W. will be blocked off from 3rd St. to Delaware Ave. for a health fair and carnival. There will be health screening booths, carnival events, prizes and hot dogs and food from the food bank.

A clown, an Easter Bunny, rides, face painting and all the activities of a street fair will keep kids and adults entertained.

Tracey Hooks, resident contact coordinator for the Greenleaf Extension Family Investment Center at 205 L St. S.W., has more information. (554-1041). The Americade Community Care (Duane Hemphill) is the sponsor for the event.

All of Southwest is welcome. ■



Volunteers on a Saturday morning gathered bags of debris along the Southwest Waterfront.



D.C. Firefighters from 6th St. S.W. joined in the effort to clean up the Southwest Waterfront.



Emma P. Ward, Outstanding Teacher

Emma P. Ward, a Southwest resident for 20 years, was recently honored as an outstanding teacher at Ideal Public Charter School in N.E. D.C. Ms. Ward is currently a member of the Board of Directors of the S.W. Community House, founder of the SWCH after-school program and a member of the SWNA Scholarship Committee. Ms. Ward believes "If you have an education, you have choices in life." ■

Washington Video

(new ad in
folder)

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photo in folder. too big for my scanner

The Anacostia Riverfront looking north on South Capitol St. toward the U.S. Capitol building, Buzzard Point and S.W. are on the left. The Federal Center Southeast is to the right, with the South Capitol St. Bridge crossing the Anacostia in the foreground. (Aerial Photo Copyright 1992, Harold Flecknoe, Silver Spring, used with permission).

Norton Bill Moves To House Floor



Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton attended a shipboard signing on the future of the Anacostia and Southwest Waterfronts, including the S.E. Federal Center.

Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton's bill to develop the Southeast Federal Center between M St. S.E. and the Anacostia River won approval of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure on which she serves and is expected to pass the House soon.

H.R. 3069, the Southeast Federal Center Redevelopment Act, gives the General Service Administration (GSA)

"wide latitude to enter into arrangements to bring appropriate development - private, federal, local, or some combination - to the site," according to a release by Congresswoman Norton. "Anticipation of the bill's passage has already sparked widespread interest among developers," the release states. "On March 10 the GSA announced the selection of five offerors bidding to construct a new headquarters for the Department of Transportation. Two of the proposals involve bids to construct the new headquarters at the SEFC. With a federal anchor, the parcel likely will be even more attractive to private revenue producing entities."

Congresswoman Norton earlier secured \$30 million to clean up the 55-acre SEFC site of federal land. The Norton bill marks the first time the GSA will have the authority to develop federal land for other than federal purposes.

"H.R. 3069 is a three-way winning proposition for the federal government, the District of Columbia and private business," she said, "because the government will get both revenue and use from the property, and District residents and private businesses will be major beneficiaries." ■



The site of the former Tracks night club on M. S.E. is becoming an office building.



Construction continues at 300 M St. S.E. for a new office building for Navy Yard contractors, now that the Navy Yard is getting 5,000 new workers.

Visit Southwest D.C.'s Website

www.swdc.org

Criminal Justice Panel At SWNA

By Jean Macdonald



(Left to right) Judge Terrell, Ms. Anderson, Chief Ramsey, Judge Mitchell, Wilma Lewis, Erik Christian, Harold Brazil



SWNA President the Rev. George E. Holmes and SWNA Safety chair Gene Solon at the Criminal Justice forum.



U. S. Attorney Wilma Lewis spoke at the forum.



Part of the audience at the forum on criminal justice

A panel of ten officials in several parts of the criminal justice system in D.C. briefed an audience of 90 or so at the annual meeting of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, Inc. at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

Superior Court Judge Mary Terrell spoke first about presiding on the innovative Drug Court, an alternative to sentencing for non-violent offenders who are willing and able to change their illegal habits through holistic treatment and counseling.

Superior Court Judge George W. Mitchell of the Juvenile Drug Court spoke next as part of the effort of the justice system to rehabilitate youth. He said that the D.C. program is more forward thinking than most programs in the country.

Ms. Sharon Styles-Anderson, standing in for Corporation Counsel Robert Rigsby, spoke of the criminal enforcement for juvenile offenders. Rehabilitation is the aim for youths up to age 21. Part of the effort is to clean up illegal drug centers by enforcing building code compliance by landlords. There is also neighborhood monitoring for prevention of illegal drug use.

Metropolitan Police Chief Charles Ramsey spoke of restorative justice and the need for better coordination between service providers and agencies to avoid duplication of services. Also there is a need to evaluate the programs for better applications. Chief Ramsey and First District Commander Kim Dine have begun "Partnership for Problem Solving" training sessions with the community to ensure consistent effort and permanent relief from the offenders.

U.S. Attorney Wilma Lewis spoke on the new approach to crime solving, which is by concentrating personnel in a district so that the neighbors and the problems of that community are familiar to the law enforcers. This way the remedy can be tailored to fit the crime.

Deputy Mayor Erik Christian spoke of the bright new day since the mayor took office. City agencies are cooperating with each other with common goals.

Council member Harold Brazil declared

that cooperation was the key to effective policing. He is introducing legislation to make drug dealing a felony. He is concerned with prisoners released and returning to their D.C. homes. Will they have literacy skills, job training, and family counseling?

The panel then answered questions and held individual discussions with audience members. ■



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Westminster ad Pick up from April 2000



Above are the 11 students and 2 teachers of the River Park Nursery School, a parent-run, non-profit cooperative. RPNS provides an exceptional learning environment for children ages 3 to 5. The program is designed to encourage individual growth and development. School hours: Monday thru Friday, 9:00 am - 12:30pm. Location: 1301 Delaware Ave., S.W. Phone: 202-488-3397.

Rec Dept. Starts "Park Enforcement Patrol"

The first 22 graduates of a new D.C. Parks and Recreation Department police force have completed training and will appear at all recreation centers in the city. They will have arresting powers - like the public housing police - and will be taking further training at the D.C. police academy. They received training from a similar program in New York City.

With "Smokey The Bear" hats, like the U.S. National Park Police, and defensive weapons (night sticks, handcuffs, etc.) they hope to be a friendly but firm influence at recreation sites.

Familiar Southwest native Wally Parry—formerly a Recreation Department roving leader—is heading the new force. ■

AARP Hears Parking Official

Norma Mapp, D.C.'s Public Parking Manager, spoke at the monthly meeting of the American Association of Retired Persons at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church.

Soprano Joyce Bouvier told of the programs of popular songs that she gives, especially to groups of senior citizens. She demonstrated her talent with a song by Irving Berlin.

Margaret Oliver read a humorous poem that she has written.

The chapter is planning a luncheon cruise on the Spirit cruise ship on Thursday, June 15, at 11 am. Members and guests can reserve space for \$26 by calling Alberta White, 554-5503. ■



Norma Mapp, a Southwest resident, is D.C.'s Public Parking Manager in the Department of Public Works.



Joyce Bouvier, left, and Margaret Oliver appeared on the AARP program in March.

S.W. Resident Walks for Cancer

A 3-day walk on May 5-7 from Frederick, MD, to Washington, DC will raise funds for breast cancer research, prevention and education.

Pat Bennet, one of our very own Southwest residents, will be participating. She will be tenting at night and walking during the day. Ms. Bennett reports that the Avon Breast Cancer Foundation has organized motivational speakers, entertainment, meals, and more for participants.

Find out how you can be a part of this historic local event, please visit the Web site <http://www.breastcancer3day.org> or call 202-466-7700. ■

Chamber Players

The S.W. Chamber Music Players, Wed., May 10, at 7:30 pm at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 6th and Maine Ave. S.W. will feature Beethoven's "Ghost" Trio, opus 71a.

Short trios by Schubert and others will be on the program. Performers are Carl Tretter, violin; Tom Blackburn, cello and Davis Ehrlich, piano. Concerts are free; donation requested. Reception follows. ■

FOURTH STREET NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

February 24, 2000

Karl C. Dine, Commanding Officer
First District
D.C. Metropolitan Police Department
415 Fourth St. SW
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Commander Dine:

At the regular monthly meeting Fourth Street Neighborhood Group on Wednesday, February 23, Irving Gamza of Carrollburg, A Condominium, and a member of the First District Advisory Committee, presented an analysis of P.S.A. 110 crime statistics as they directly impact on the area of the Group's respective communities. Mr. Gamza will present his report at the Partnership for Crime and Disorder Problem Solving Training on Saturday, February 26.

Upon hearing his findings, the members voted unanimously to endorse his report and its recommendations, specifically the need for increased night patrols on M and N Streets.

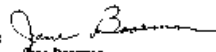
Also of great concern is the very apparent turnover in your staff. We seek your advice on how we might be of assistance in stabilizing the situation, particularly with respect to your Lieutenants, Sergeants and MPOs.

We commend you and the other officers of P.S.A. 110 for your attention to our community and the improvements we have noted in the decline of incidents in recent months.

Participating in the Fourth Street Neighborhood Group regularly are members from Carrollburg Square Condominium, Carrollburg, A Condominium, Edgewater Condominium, Harbor Square Cooperative, River Park Mutual Homes, Riverside Condominium, Tiber Island Condominium and Tiber Island Cooperative and, on occasion, Channel Square Apartments and St. James Mutual Homes.

Sincerely,

Fourth Street Neighborhood Group

by: 
Jane Boorman
1425 Fourth St. SW, A-607
Washington, D.C. 20024

cc: PSNG Members



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

March 2, 2000

Mrs. Jane Boorman
1425 Fourth Street, SW, A-607
Washington, D.C. 20024

Dear Mrs. Boorman:

Thank you for your letter of February 24, 2000, regarding the Fourth Street Neighborhood Group. Its findings, and the cited issues, I greatly appreciate your personal support, the ever constant support of Mr. Irving Gamza, as well as the support of the entire Fourth Street Neighborhood Group. I also appreciate your commendation for the members of PSA 110, who all are working hard to keep the neighborhood safe.

As you mention, we have made significant progress both in crime reduction and in the communication, cooperation, and commitment between the police and members of the community. As a result, crime has not only been reduced but perhaps even more importantly, the feeling of partnership and teamwork has been greatly enhanced.

As it relates to your request for focused patrol in the area of M and N Streets, we have continued to increase our visibility, especially around these requested areas and will continue to do so. I would ask that you keep Lieutenant Douglas and me apprised of this issue. As you noted, there has been a significant reduction in crime in the area. Additionally, the Partnership for Problem Solving training sessions and meetings have gone very well and have clearly produced results in terms of what we collectively agree requires continued focus. Again, I thank you and the group as a whole for your support in this endeavor because as you know, it is a team process that requires significant commitment from the community.

Turnover in staff is another critical issue you raised with which I concur. It is a constant challenge not only in the police district but also for the agency as a whole to maintain personnel in assignments best suited to them as well as the mission of the agency. After the turnover that you mention, I placed Lieutenant Douglas in PSA 110 because I thought he would be particularly suited to the challenges and tasks required in view of his obvious talent. I plan to keep him assigned there as long as I can. As you know, we are aggressively recruiting qualified officers to join the Metropolitan Police Department and this increase in personnel will hopefully help reduce the number of transfers over time.

Again, thanks for your letter and your support. We will continue to work closely with you and the other members to reduce crime and enhance our community/police partnership.

Sincerely,

Karl C. Dine
Commander

P.O. Box 1606, Washington, D.C. 20013-1606

Fine Arts O.K.'s Mandarin Hotel Design

The federal agency responsible for urban design approval in the national capital - The Commission on Fine Arts - has approved the design for the new Mandarin Hotel on the Southwest Waterfront.

Charles H. Atherton, secretary to the CFA, wrote to the city: "...This hotel has truly excited the Commission. If the Willard is a five-star hotel, this certainly has to be close to a six..." ■

TIF Financing For Mandarin

The District of Columbia government is helping to finance the new Mandarin Hotel to be built at 1330 Maryland Ave. S.W. by issuing tax-exempt revenue bonds, called TIF for "Tax Increment Financing" bonds. The city has already approved TIFs for Gallery Place, but not for expansion of the Renaissance Washington Hotel at 9th and K St. N.W. near the new Convention Center site. A maximum of \$300 million in TIF bonds is allowed for D.C.

The Mayor's recommendation to the Council and the Council's approval on March 7 cover economic development as well as tax growth factors. At a Council hearing on Mar. 3, Eric Price, Deputy Mayor For Planning and Economic Development, spoke of the special merits of the Mandarin project, including its location at an important gateway to the city - the 14th St. Bridge—job creation and contracting opportunities within the District, proposed construction of a stairway to the Southwest Waterfront, and the need to complete the hotel portion of the Portals development where two attempts have failed. Under the D.C. Code a project needs special merit not achieved without TIF.

The D.C. Chief Financial Officer must certify or reject an application for TIF within 120 days. The CFO must find the project financially feasible, a net increase in taxes payable to the District and benefits that exceed the costs to the District of Columbia.

Editor's Note: The Southwest waterfront is included in the "priority development area" of the Tax Increment Financing Law (D.C. Act 12-354), which includes "the Southeast Federal Center/Navy Yard area." That area is defined to include the Buzzard Point area and is described as extending to "14th St. S.W. and the Washington Channel Waterway." As the aerial photo on page 1 shows, the site of the Mandarin Hotel is east of 14th St. and overlooking the waterfront. ■

Public Notice

Ft. McNair To Demolish Bldg.

An Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) have been prepared for the demolition of Building T-81 on the post, a metal building used to store grounds maintenance equipment. The EA and FONSI are available to the public at the S.W. Branch Library at 3rd and I St. S.W. (entrance on Wesley Place).

Also at the library are an EA and FONSI for Ft. McNair's Engineering Plans and Services Division's Operation and Maintenance projects for FY 2000. Several projects are included. ■



An artist's rendering of the Mandarin Hotel, as it will look on the Southwest Waterfront at 14th and Maryland Ave.

Davie Renshaw Moves To OK

By Carole Early



Davie Renshaw, retiring first vice president of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly.

Davie Renshaw, an active member of the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly - most recently as a vice president - and also of Councilman Jack Evans' Task Force, the Arts Task Force, the Clean Water Task Force, the Fourth Street Neighborhood Group, and for pleasure, St. Augustine's Church and the Waterside Garden, is moving out of Washington with her

husband, Ben.

Prior to making the final move out West, they will temporarily live in Kennedyville, MD, which is near Chestertown. In the fall they will permanently take up residence in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where they will be near her family. One son resides in Tulsa and the other in Kansas City, MO. Future plans include lots of gardening for Davie, retirement in April of 2000 for Ben, spending more time with family and friends and lots of travel. Davie wants to market the memoirs of her aunt. She has stories of their western migration in a covered wagon.

Davie received a resolution from the Fourth Street Neighborhood Group citing her importance to the community. She received a letter from Jack Evans, who thanked Davie "for her important contributions and her wonderful ability to get things done—and done well, for the Task Force and the Southwest community. We will miss her!"

At the final board meeting that Davie attended, members of the Board of SWNA gave detailed testimonials to Davie's great work. She will be remembered as a leader and a wonderful team player by all of us who know her. ■

Capitol Square

By Carole Early

All of us have been watching the townhouses at Capitol Square with great interest. After talking to the sales manager, Kathleen Wiltsey, I learned that over 70% have sold. The reason for the slow-down in building

activity is that they are awaiting their building permit. This is needed before the construction phase can begin.

They already had gotten the permit for the land development (putting pipes, etc. underground). ■

Shhhhh...

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Tiber Island Cooperative Homes, the city's premier waterfront community, is the place to live. A quick walk from Capitol Hill, the Mall, and downtown's attractions, Tiber Island is also convenient to major roads and Metro.

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visit our web site @ www.tiberisland.com



Helen vs. Annie, "The Miracle Worker"

By Wallace Babington

When Helen Keller and Annie Sullivan fight on Arena's stage, arms, legs and torsos are twisted, entwined and tortured; plates, spoons, and eggs are flung about with abandon; and a battle takes place that is worthy of the worst TV wrestling match. And that's just one part of the innovative and daring production of "The Miracle Worker" now on stage at Arena.

I went to see this play against my better judgment. It is one of the plays that I decided never to see again. My resistance to the play is partly because it has been performed innumerable times over the years by all types of acting companies.

However, this production is a play I have never seen before. Nick Olcott's direction of this very familiar theater piece shows what can be done with creativity, imagination and skill. He has fashioned a setting for this family drama about the deaf-blind Helen Keller and her teacher Annie Sullivan that is intriguing, imaginative and provocative. He has devised a way of using sign language interpreters that adds tension and excitement to the production. And he has created an interracial Keller family that actually increases our understanding of the play by giving it a new dimension and depth.

The story is simply the way Annie rescued Helen from a life of solitary confinement by patience, skill, determination and brute force. Annie does this in spite of a Helen's devoted family that spoils her with

the best intentions. The encounter between these two dynamos is never sentimental or melodramatic. It is presented in a direct, factual way that dramatizes the conflict without demeaning the protagonists. And there is a surprising amount of humor that comes through.

Shira Grabelsky is a local college student who portrays Helen Keller as a child - and we believe she is just that for every minute she's on stage. And what a performance!

Kelley McAndrew makes Annie a worthy opponent for Helen; she comes across as strong, determined and believable. Standing ovations are so common in theaters today that they have become meaningless. For this production, the standing ovation has meaning and is deserved; it expresses a keen appreciation for a miraculous production about a miracle worker.

"The Miracle Worker" by William Gibson, directed by Nick Olcott. At Arena Stage through April 30.

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A new feature of Arena's Audience Enrichment series is worth exploring: Arena Backstage. On April 24, at 7:30 pm director Nick Olcott, Allan Lee Hughes, lighting designer and Master Electrician Christopher Lewton will discuss the design for "The Miracle Worker" and the backstage action that brings it to life. For information call the Audience Enrichment Dept. at 554-9066, Ext. 276. ■



A scene from the Arena Stage play, *The Miracle Worker*. Helen Keller as a deaf and blind child learns that things, such as water, have names, and that she can spell the names out with her fingers on the hand of her teacher, Annie Sullivan.



Blue by Charles Randolph-Wright will be performed at the Kreeger Theatre, Arena Stage April 20th through June 4.

Jenny's Pick up 1/2 page ad from April/00 with changes below

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